

New Resource Available For Missouri Soybean Farmers

JEFFERSON CITY, MO.

Missouri farmers have a new tool available to help monitor and manage disease in their soybean fields this growing season. The Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council (MSMC) and the soybean checkoff have set up a toll-free hotline for the state's soybean growers to call for the latest information on soybean rust. The hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-866-587-1206.

News and information on the hotline will be provided by Allen Wrather, plant pathologist at the University of Missouri's Delta Research Center. Wrather plans to provide frequent updates on the hotline with more detailed information as the growing season progresses.

Soybean rust is a foliage disease caused by the fungus *Phakopsora pachyrhizata*. The disease causes soybeans to lose their leaves prematurely and has the potential to cause significant soybean yield losses. Soybean rust was detected in 37 Missouri counties in 2007.

"Ever since rust was first discovered in the United States in 2004, the soybean checkoff has worked in conjunction with national, state and local resources on early warning, diagnostic and management tools," said Todd Gibson, chairman of the MSMC and a soybean farmer from Norborne, Mo. "This is just another example of ways we're working to provide growers with more information so they can make informed decisions regarding their crop."

In addition to monitoring the spread of soybean rust, Missouri soybean farmers should be prepared to take prompt action if a risk of rust develops. Timely detection of the disease can provide farmers with advanced warning to enable proper application of fungicides, the only current effective rust-management option. Farmers are encouraged to discuss a soybean rust management plan with their local extension office and ask their agricultural chemical dealer about the availability of fungicides. Δ